

STUDY NOTES

BLUEPRINTS FOR LIFE

a series at New City Church

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message "Marriage: The Beautiful Dance of Love, Submission, and The Gospel" on 8/12/18 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these study notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective community groups.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

SCRIPTURE: EPHESIANS 5:15-32

COMMUNITY AS A CRITICAL COMPONENT

Most people only view the success of marriage to be the burden of the husband and wife. The bible paints a different picture. Paul writes about marriage in the context of talking directly to the entire church. Whether someone is married, single, dating, or divorced, every person has a critical role to play in the success of marriage.

- *How are **you** important to the success of someone else's marriage?*
- *How is someone else's marriage important to the success of another marriage (even a marriage that might not exist yet)?*

GOSPEL REENACTMENT

In eastern or more traditional cultures marriage is seen more as a business proposition and is about family legacy. In our western cultures, romance and personal fulfillment are seen two primary purposes for marriage. In this context,

marriage becomes about self. However, the bible talks about marriage in terms of Christ's love for the church. His love for us is unconditional. In marriage, when two people vow their love to each other, they are vowing their love, in front of their community, without conditions.

- 1. Marriage is about sanctifying us (making us more like Jesus).**
- 2. Marriage is about removing selfishness.**
- 3. Marriage is about mutual sacrifice.**

- *What expectations do most people have of married life? Why would these three principles be so hard to practice?*
- *Some people would say that a relationship like this sounds miserable. How is it actually romantic to see/be in a marriage that is reenacting the gospel?*

SACRIFICIAL ROLES

Both the husband and the wife are called to submit to Jesus first and foremost. Because they are both submitting to Jesus, they are both called to sacrifice themselves for the good of the other person. The ways they are called to sacrifice are different. Paul says that wives are to submit to their own husbands, and husbands should give up everything for the good of their wives. When both people live like this, it looks like a beautiful dance.

- *How are these roles not about gender stereotypes, but about mutual sacrifice for the other?*
- *Why are both the husband's role and the wife's role difficult?*
- *How should we look to Jesus as an example of what it means to sacrifice for another?*
- *Pray with each other for the marriages in your community.*